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ABSTRACT

An experimental prison program on a college campus is discussed. The purpose of the project, Project Newgate, is to find innovative ways of helping society's wrongdoers. Problems discussed are: salaries, travel expenses, communications, supplies, personnel training, admission, staff recruitment, and policy formation. (CK)

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PROJECT NEWGATE: MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY AND FEDERAL YOUTH CENTER INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

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Introduction

Project Newgate at Morehead State University and the Federal Youth Center at Ashland, Kentucky, grew out of a desire on the behalf of a State University's desire to serve its region and a penal institution with a director who was innovative in trying to search out ways of helping human beings who have gone wrong.

Development

The original proposal grew out of many group conferences involving corrections personnel and University faculty and administrative staff. The program was molded and tempered by the knowledge and ideas of both groups.

Challenges for Change

Project Newgate meant change from the beginning in both the Youth Center and the University.

There was considerable resistance by some of our University administrators because of the unidentifiable damage that could come to the University as a result of having ex-cons on campus.

The staff at the Federal Youth Center did not want some college professors running loose in a prison with the thought in mind they know something about "criminals".

Each step in the change process brought about reaction from the staff at Newgate and the University.

The Future

Flexibility and a desire to help individuals has been evidenced at the Youth Center. The University has gained insight in helping individuals from all walks of life.

A new model for rehabilitation of offenders against society is emerging with the Youth Center as well as a model study center has been established on the University campus serving as a rehabilitation program giving individuals a new lease on life.

Project Newgate
Opening Doors to Institutional Cooperation

The beginning:

Cooperation between Morehead State University and the Federal Youth Center began in 1963 as the result of the establishment of a student teaching center within the Youth Center. This program continued through 1965 and was terminated at that time. During the summer of 1965 an experimental reading program was developed to test two different approaches of teaching reading to low achievers in prison.

Newgate - A dream

Upward Bound was started on the Morehead State University campus in 1966. Great success was achieved in reaching students from low income families who had been forgotten and rejected by the public school system. It was thought by many of the Upward Bound staff that juvenile delinquents could be reached by the same process used with the students from low income families.

A short news article about an experimental prison program in Oregon based upon the Upward Bound concept, a long talk with Dr. Tom Billings, Director of Upward Bound in Washington, conferences with the Director and staff from the Federal Youth Center--Newgate at the Federal Youth Center was born.

Why go looking for trouble!

One of our University administrators said of the Newgate idea, "Why go looking for trouble. We already have enough problems." This type of resistance made our job even more difficult. Staff members at the Youth Center thought little could be done other than what was already being done and the very idea of some of these young "punks" going to college was utterly ridiculous.

A Framework for Cooperation:

It was recognized from the beginning that problems and misunderstandings would occur. Agreement was reached by all involved that when this occurred, a conference would be called to clarify the problems and set new directions for operations.

Who is in charge had to be clearly established from the beginning. It was decided that since the grant was to the University that the program would be under the direction of the Research and Development Center at Morehead State University. However, it was readily agreed that no policy or major decision would be made without consulting with the Director of the Federal Youth Center.

A group of University people were elected to give advice to the operation of the program and lend their expertise to continual evaluation of the activities of Newgate.

An overall Advisory Council was selected consisting of the best minds in corrections, corrections education and University personnel to give direction to the program.

Problems did arise!

I should like to list in a very brief form problems which have risen and solutions have been found for each--maybe not the most desirable solution, however:

1. Salary schedule - employees at the Federal Youth Center receive higher salaries than the University because of University salaries being based on degrees.
2. Travel expenses - We are limited to the state rate for reimbursement for travel.
3. Break in Communications - Messages and mail did not reach the Director of Newgate when it should.
4. Adjusting pay schedule to the University computer operations.
5. Getting supplies when needed for a crash program.
6. Training of personnel who are to work as staff members for Newgate inside of the Federal Youth Center.
7. Establishing new procedures for admitting Newgate students to the University.
8. Finding qualified staff to teach college level courses for credit at the Center.
9. Difficulty in planning the needs of the Newgate program far enough in advance to permit an adequate gear-up time.
10. Understanding the multitude of unwritten policies and regulations of the correctional institution and the University.

11. Developing channels of communications between the Newgate staff and other Federal Youth Center staff members.

12. Extreme demands of time and the pressure of the job created tensions between Newgate staff members.

Many other problems could be listed; however, I feel I have given some indication of different types of problems which have developed as a result of the Newgate Program.

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